



May 15, 2023

NYSGC Chair O’Dwyer: NYS Budget Guarantees Improved Backstretch Housing for Belmont & Saratoga Race Course

The enacted 2023-24 New York State Budget amends New York State Racing, Pari-Mutuel Wagering and Breeding Law section 212(8)(i) to require the New York State Franchise Oversight Board to “ensure adequate funds for maintenance and repair of existing structures at Saratoga racetrack and Belmont Park racetrack and for the improvement of onsite backstretch personnel housing and quality of life.”

New York State Gaming Commission Chair Brian O’Dwyer applauded the measure, stating:

“This Budget ensures the hundreds of backstretch workers who live and work at Belmont Park and Saratoga Race Course will always have up-to-date housing and improved quality of life. This is a necessary and welcome guarantee of basic living needs for these dedicated employees and their families, who are the backbone of the sport.

“I’ve been a strong advocate for improving conditions for the backstretch community who work tirelessly to care for horses and make New York State’s nation-leading horse racing possible.

“I applaud and thank Governor Kathy Hochul, Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, and NYRA for recognizing the contribution these individuals make to New York’s Thoroughbred racing, as well as our state’s agricultural and economic development.”

###